BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL ON
ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER

SUPPORTING BC's EDUCATION SYSTEM

1997/98 ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE

MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

TRAINING & TECHNOLOGY

April 7, 1998

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BCCAT 1997-98 Annual Report
to the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training & Technology

Prepared by the
BC Council on Admissions & Transfer
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A. BACKGROUND

The British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) received a Management Letter from the Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, Skills and Training dated June 2, 1997. The Management Letter outlined the role of BCCAT and provided a clear set of expectations with respect to the various projects and activities that would be undertaken in the 1997/98 fiscal year. ***(attachment A)***

This report outlines what has been accomplished relative to the items listed in the Management Letter and also outlines some significant activities that were undertaken but were not stipulated specifically in the Management Letter.

All activities undertaken by the Council have been consistent with our responsibility to provide service to the BC post-secondary system, and all have supported and reflected major values of our system, of equitable treatment of students, increased access for all students, and public accountability.

B. ONGOING ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL

1. Council and its Committees

The Council held four general meetings during 1997/98, one of which was held at the University College of the Cariboo and one at Langara College. In addition, there were meetings of the Council's Program and Articulation Committee, the Research Committee, the Block Transfer Committee, and the Task Force on Standards and Processes. The previous Minister appointed three new members to Council, eliminated the position of public representative, and indicated that he wished to add two additional faculty positions.

2. Support and Coordination of Provincial Articulation Committees

One of the principal activities of the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer is the support and coordination of provincial post-secondary articulation committees. This year staff devised and implemented new procedures for communicating more regularly and closely with committees. This involves responding to every set of minutes, noting any areas of interest or concern; sending out regular e-mail bulletins and letters to all committees updating them on Council activities and areas of interest to them; instituting an articulation committee menu on BCCAT Net; reporting on meeting highlights in Council newsletters; and ensuring all committees have Liaison Administrators.

One of the two major undertakings this year, however, was the addition of secondary school representatives to all appropriate articulation committees. This has been accomplished in collaboration with C2T2, which has carried the responsibility of identifying the secondary school representative. C2T2 has received assistance in this endeavor from the Career Education Society and the BC Teachers' Federation. To date,

secondary school representatives have been confirmed for 43 committees and another 7 are pending. ***(attachments B.2.1 and B.2.2)***

The second significant articulation committee-related project undertaken by Council staff this year was the production of the second and much revised edition of the Articulation Committee Handbook. In 1996/97, the Council published the first edition of a Handbook for Articulation Committee Chairs and Liaison Administrators. The new edition of the handbook is intended to be used as a reference document by all members. It contains information pertaining to:

- the role and structure of BCCAT
- terms of reference for the Program and Articulation Committee under whose auspices Articulation Committees report
- terms of reference for Articulation Committees
- the role and responsibilities of an Articulation Committee Chair
- the role and responsibilities of a Liaison Administrator
- the role and responsibilities of individual members
- the role of the secondary school representative
- a meeting report form
- frequently asked questions about Articulation Committees
- the list of Provincial Articulation Committees
- Principles and Guidelines for Transfer
- the BC Transfer Credit Evaluation Form

This handbook will be distributed to articulation committee members in April of 1998 and is also available for downloading and copying from our web site. ***(attachment B.2.3)***

3. 1997/98 B.C. Transfer Guide and BCCAT Net

BCCAT published its eighth annual edition (1997/98) of the BC Transfer Guide and distributed over 2,400 copies to public and private post-secondary institutions, high schools, municipal libraries, Education Ministries across Canada, and to a number of public and private agencies and organizations who require copies. ***(attachment B.3.1)***

The first edition of the online version of the Guide was released in June of 1996 and has proved to be most successful. An extensive and detailed examination of the online transfer guide was undertaken this year and has resulted in several significant improvements to make the guide more user friendly. For example, because there is not a commonly accepted set of discipline names, our new search mechanism first identifies the institution being queried and then lists only the discipline names for that institution rather than all discipline names for all institutions as occurred in our earlier version.

Approximately 24,000 "hits" occurred to the main transfer guide menu in 1997 and this level of activity continues to increase in 1998 as more people gain access to the World Wide Web and become aware of the utility of our online version of the Transfer Guide. In the first three months of 1998 we recorded over 12,000 visits to the online guide.

indicating that visitors will at least double this year. ***(attachment B.3.2)*** We hope to be able to reduce the number of hard copies printed in future years as more and more people are able to rely upon using the online version. However, at the moment, a recent survey of college and university advisors produced clear evidence that the printed guide is still a necessary and valued format.

It takes an enormous amount of time and effort to ensure that the Transfer Guide is an effective tool for educational planning. Much time and effort of our office staff as well as our Transfer Guide Coordinator is required to produce the guide on time and on budget especially considering that the interactions of 27 public institutions and three private institutions are involved in its production. However, the Transfer Guide is an indispensable document relied upon by all of the post-secondary system and students contemplating entering or who have entered our system of higher education.

The Council's web site, BCCAT Net, was also extensively revised in terms of general appearance and overall utility in accordance with the best practices for the publication of web sites. ***(attachments B.3.3 and B.3.4)*** In 1997 the "Post-Secondary System" menu of BCCAT Net recorded over 5,000 "hits" and this number is also showing a steep increase at the start of 1998, recording 2,400 already this year. Additionally, we have now provided a menu for items of interest to articulation committees. On our publications menu, between research reports, newsletters and other reports, we have added eight new items to our list of publications this year. We are very pleased at the indication that BCCAT Net is becoming a source of information for students, advisors, faculty and others about BC's post-secondary system in general.

We were able to register our web site as '**www.bccat.bc.ca**' and use '**bccat.bc.ca**' as our domain name for email addresses. We will be able to retain this usage regardless of which computer web server we use. Additionally, we were able to register "BCCAT" as an official mark by the Registrar of Trade-marks of the Canadian Intellectual Property Office.

4. Institutional Contact Persons

We held our annual meeting of Institutional Contact Persons to review the process of Council's overall coordination and recording of transfer guide agreements and the production of our Transfer Guide as well as numerous other related issues. ***(attachment B.4)***

5. Facilitating Transfer and Mediating Transfer Disputes

The Council had no major involvement in mediating transfer disputes during the past year but did respond to a few inquires with respect to potential transfer difficulties. Advice and direction was provided to facilitate such transfer problems being resolved between respective institutions without significant involvement from the Council.

The Council assisted the Institute of Indigenous Government toward their goal of

establishing transfer credit equivalencies with the four major universities. During the past year, we convened meetings with UBC, SFU, and UVic following our successful meeting with UNBC in the previous year. Each meeting included IIG staff and senior university administrative officers and other appropriate individuals. The Executive Director attended as a facilitator. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce the mission and goals of the IIG to each university and to encourage a dialogue between the two institutions and to identify the most appropriate process that should occur to optimize the likelihood of IIG obtaining transfer credit for its courses. The Council felt that a special process was warranted given the uniqueness of the IIG's mandate and its curriculum. It is too early to assess the overall success of the IIG in establishing appropriate transfer credit arrangements but to date effective transfer arrangements are in place with UNBC. ***(attachment B.5)***

Council staff held a half-day workshop for administrators and faculty from Kwantlen University College on the topic of "Developing Transfer Policy as a Receiving Institution." This was well received as Kwantlen is currently defining itself as a receiving institution and developing policies to support that role. We also made a presentation on block transfer to faculty and administrators of Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, and to the Council of Chairs of Education Councils. The Executive Director presented a workshop on the use of the online Transfer Guide and on other Council-related matters to the annual meeting of the BC Advisors Association.

The Council has also been assisting the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology in establishing their transfer arrangements and in overcoming some difficulties they have experienced. The Council is planning to give a workshop on articulation and transfer for NVIT faculty and staff.

6. Collaboration with Other Agencies and the Ministry

a. Collaboration with the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2)

The protocol agreement between the Council and the C2T2 clarifies the respective roles of the two agencies and identifies the kinds of projects for which there would be a commitment for collaboration. The protocol was reviewed by BCCAT and C2T2 and continues to remain in place. Cooperation on a variety of activities has continued to be very successful.

As an outgrowth of the English Articulation dispute in 1996/97, the Council supported the C2T2's sponsorship of the Learning Outcomes Committee, a sub-committee of the English Articulation Committee. This committee is examining the feasibility of developing learning outcomes for first year transfer courses. The Council assisted C2T2 in obtaining representation from both colleges and universities on this Committee.

The Council co-sponsored with C2T2 the funding of a telecommunications project. The purpose of this project is to develop and pilot test the use of electronic communications to facilitate the work of Provincial Articulation Committees between annual meetings. This project is to be completed in 1998 and is being conducted by C2T2.

The Council has maintained active participation in C2T2's Provincial Steering Committee on Flexible Assessment (PLA) as well as participated in the recent PLA Think Tank. The Council has assisted the Steering Committee in revising the existing guidelines (as initially developed by our Council) and in particular by attempting to help resolve the contentious issue of whether or not PLA credits should be recorded as such on official student transcripts.

The C2T2 assisted the Council in our study of the feasibility of developing Block Transfer agreements and will continue to assist the Council during the implementation phases of the project.

The addition of representatives from secondary schools to provincial articulation committees has been a collaborative endeavour between BCCAT and C2T2. The C2T2 Transitions Team has worked with the Career Education Society and the BCTF to identify the secondary school representatives, and BCCAT has communicated with the articulation committees to ensure that these additional members are invited and welcomed, and that their role is clearly understood by everyone.

The Special Advisor served as a member of the Working Committee on Public-Private Articulation Agreements, which was jointly chaired by C2T2 and the Ministry. This committee recommended terms of reference for establishing formal articulation agreements between accredited private post-secondary institutions and public post-secondary institutions. Their final report has been endorsed by the Ministry, and this committee has now completed its task.

The Special Advisor served as a member of a writing team that produced *Enhancing Transitions*. This was a production of C2T2 and is aimed at assisting post-secondary institutions that wish to construct articulation agreements with high schools or school districts. It has proven to be a popular document and has gone into a second printing.

Finally, the Director of the C2T2 Transitions Team serves as a member of our Transfer Survival Guide Committee, which is overseeing the production of user-friendly transfer materials for students.

b. Collaboration with the Centre for Education Information Standards and Services (CEISS)

The Council has worked with CEISS to assist them in working with the post-secondary system and to work collaboratively with BCCAT on projects of mutual

interest.

The Executive Director assisted CEISS in developing, in collaboration with the Senior Instructional Officers Committee, a number of questions the answers to which have the potential to facilitate educational planning by the Vice-Presidents of Instruction in the colleges and institutes.

Last year we reported in our Management Letter that the Council contracted with GDA Research and Information Systems Inc. to analyze the data collected in the 1995 and 1996 Student Outcomes Surveys with a particular focus on the responses from those students who were classified as having exited from University Transfer programs. This set of 14,534 students was surveyed on whether or not they had tried to transfer credits and for those who did transfer credits, whether or not they experienced "problems in completing this transfer." Approximately 16% of transfer students indicated some form of transfer problem and these students were encouraged to indicate to the telephone surveyor the precise nature of the problem encountered. Much of the research focused on the difficult task of analyzing and categorizing these "open ended" subjective responses, with the primary purpose being to understand more clearly the precise nature and magnitude of different transfer problems. Such understanding was also intended to identify what transfer-related questions could be added to the 1997 survey to yield more useful and easily interpretable data for future analyses.

The responses were also helpful to the work of the Task Force on Standards and Processes in identifying that many transfer problems are unrelated to specific articulated transfer agreements and instead occur as a result of institutional administrative processes and procedures. The report also provided some very useful information describing patterns of student mobility and confirmed that the majority of college academic students do transfer (69%), and the vast majority of these transfer from a college to a university. Last year's report entitled *Student Transfer Issues Revealed in British Columbia's Post-Secondary Education Student Outcomes Surveys: An analysis Intended to Enhance the Survey's Future Utility* is available on our web site. The results from this study were utilized to revise and expand a number of transfer related questions to be employed in the 1997 survey.

This past year, Council contracted with CEISS to analyze and identify student transfer issues revealed in the 1997 BC's Post-Secondary Education Student Outcomes Survey. ***(attachment B.6.b.1)*** The 1997 questions pertaining to transfer were substantially expanded as a result of Council's research on this issue a year ago.***(see Question 15 in attachment B.6.b.2)*** The report analyzing the detailed responses to the transfer questions should be available in the spring of 1998.

c. Collaboration with the Outcomes Working Group (OWG)

The Executive Director is an active member of OWG and assists this committee on many aspects of its work.

d. Collaboration with the Center for Applied Academics (CFAA)

This year the CFAA requested us to develop a summary of university admission requirements for students not eligible for direct entry to the universities, but who can become eligible after completing a specified number of credits at a community college. This task involved extensive consultation with the major universities and proved to be a most successful and valuable project to undertake. Much confusion about the requirements is now clarified and a one-page document outlining the requirements is now posted on our web site and will be placed in our annual transfer guide. This information is particularly useful for students contemplating taking applied academic courses in high school and where such courses are not acceptable for satisfying direct entry requirements at our universities. ***(attachments B.6.d and B.6.d.1)***

e. Collaboration with the Advanced Education Council of British Columbia (AECBC)

The Executive Director participated in the AECBC's orientation workshop for new College/Institute Board members.

f. Meetings with Post-Secondary Institutions

The Executive Director held separate meetings with senior administrators and others at University College of the Cariboo, Okanagan University College, and Malaspina University-College to discuss their respective roles as receiving institutions in addition to being sending institutions. In particular, the question of developing block transfer arrangements to facilitate their role as a receiving institution was discussed and will be pursued further as the Council moves to its implementation phase of block transfer. The Executive Director also met with administrators and faculty at North Island College to discuss their unique needs with respect to student transfer.

g. Collaboration with the Ministry

The Executive Director was involved in numerous consultations with senior Ministry staff in keeping them informed of the work of the Council as well as becoming informed of related projects being undertaken by various facets of the Ministry.

The Executive Director accepted an invitation to join a newly established Program Directors Committee. This committee is composed of the Assistant Deputy Ministers and their Directors from both the post-secondary branch and the K-12

branch as well as the Executive Directors of C2T2, CFAA, and BCCAT. The purpose of this Committee is to facilitate overall planning and coordination between the Ministry and its agencies as well to facilitate better integration of the secondary and post-secondary systems.

The Council made a formal presentation at the First Annual Forum on Issues and Strategic Priorities for the College, Institute and Agency system in British Columbia. The Council also participated in the December 5th Minister's Forum on Universities.

As a result of a meeting with the Administrative Assistant to the Minister, the Council contacted the Office of the Premier's Advisor on Youth to discuss issues of mutual interest. Consequently, the Executive Assistant from that office is assisting the Council with its current project to develop a transfer survival guide for students.

h. Collaboration with Other Provincial Level Committees and Organizations

Council staff are actively involved with numerous organizations and province-wide committees including the Senior Instructional Officers Committee, Deans and Directors of Academic and Career/Technical Programs, Deans and Directors of Health and Human Services Programs, the Senior Educational Services Officers Committee, the BC Registrars Association, the BC Advisors Association, Council of Chairs of Educational Councils, University Vice Presidents Academic Committee, and the BC Institutional Researchers and Planners.

For the first time this year, the Executive Director and the Special Advisor held a full day workshop/consultation session with the executive of the BC branch of the Canadian Federation of Students. This was very successful, and resulted in BCCAT receiving much first hand evidence of transfer difficulties, as well as excellent advice from the student perspective. It has also resulted in strengthened ties with the CFS, and a CFS member was invited to sit on our Transfer Survival Guide Committee.

i. Collaboration with Out-of-Province or National Agencies

The Council maintains contact with similar agencies in other jurisdictions and in particular with the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer. During the past year we were also in contact with the New Brunswick Department of Advanced Education and Labour and the Newfoundland and Labrador Council on Higher Education. We maintain links to these organizations on our website, and regularly exchange documents.

The Executive Director was invited to join the Association of Canadian Community College's recently established Task Force on Mobility and Transferability. The purpose of this task force is to develop and implement a pan-

Canadian protocol to maximize the recognition of transfer credit among Canadian community colleges and technical institutes.

The Executive Director was invited to present a workshop at Olds College in Alberta on the BC Transfer and Articulation system. Olds College now offers baccalaureate degrees and wishes to establish formal transfer relationships with BC colleges and universities to facilitate the portability of credits as both a sending and receiving institution in agriculture and horticulture related courses and programs. ***(attachment B.6.i)***

j. Meeting Room Support to the Education System

The Council offered free access to its 16 seat meeting room adjacent to the Council's offices. It was accessed on 58 occasions in 1997/98 by a wide variety of groups and organizations connected with the post-secondary and K-12 sectors of the public education system. This represents a considerable convenience, and savings, to our colleagues in education.

C. SPECIAL PROJECTS & RESEARCH REPORTS

1. Study of Block Transfer Options

Block Transfer was the main focus of the work of the Special Advisor this year. In April 1997, Council distributed a Discussion Paper ***(attachment C.1.1)*** on the topic, which asked for responses from all sectors to the question:

"Should we develop a block transfer system for arts and sciences degrees in British Columbia?

If yes,
Should block transfer supplement or replace our current course to course transfer system?
Which model or models of block transfer (ranked in order of preference) are most feasible for our British Columbia context?
Should block transfer be implemented through legislation, or only through voluntary agreement by participating institutions?

If no,
What improvements, if any, would you suggest to our current system of credit transfer?"

Council received over 50 responses from the post-secondary system to these questions. Almost all public institutions and a variety of committees, organizations and individuals were represented. In addition, Council staff made numerous presentations on block

transfer, and held a major invitational forum involving over 100 representatives from all sectors of the post-secondary system. A comprehensive analysis of all the feedback we received is attached. ***(attachment C.1.2)*** A newsletter summarizing the main points was distributed widely. ***(attachment C.1.3)***

In essence, the advice we received was that for arts and science transfer, the current course to course transfer system is reasonably functional and effective. Improvements are needed, however, and we received many suggestions on innovative approaches to enhancing transfer. After extensive deliberation, Council passed the following motions at its meeting of December 12, 1997:

Motion 1

In light of the Council's research on block transfer in B.C. and other jurisdictions, and in light of the responses, comments and recommendations received on this topic from the post-secondary system, the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer believes that our current system is working well but can be enhanced, and therefore supports and encourages the development and promotion of block transfer arrangements for arts and science programs and courses that:

[Principles]

1. *optimize credit transfer opportunities for students*
2. *are acceptable on a voluntary basis by both sending and receiving institutions*
3. *supplement, but do not replace, the current system of course-by-course transfer*
4. *complement efforts to improve course to course transfer arrangements*
5. *provide greater flexibility in enabling sending institutions to develop innovative curricular approaches for their courses*
6. *encompass as many institutions as possible in multi-lateral or system-wide agreements*
7. *are clear and understandable and published in a form accessible to students and advisors.*

[Initiatives]

While not excluding any particular model of block transfer, these initiatives should initially focus on one or more of the following types of activity:

1. *increasing the flexibility of first and second year prerequisites and program requirements for transfer students entering receiving institutions*
2. *developing clearly defined sets of course requirements for particular programs to facilitate student planning*
3. *providing block transfer arrangements for associate degrees or other equivalent credentials*
4. *proposing first year transfer programs which guarantee eligibility for admission and a minimum of 30 credits at all receiving institutions in B.C.*
5. *exploring with the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology the implications of the learning outcomes approach to transfer arrangements.*

Motion 2
That articulation committees be informed of this motion and be mandated where appropriate to undertake discussion and actions to achieve these principles and initiatives.

Based on this motion, an implementation plan was developed and approved in principle by Council at its March 6th meeting. ***(attachment C.1.4)*** It outlines a multi-faceted strategy for communicating and implementing block transfer initiatives and other transfer innovations. It proposes the establishment of an Associate Degree Review Task Force to review the associate degree and the proposed First Year Transfer Program, and a Transfer Innovations Committee to oversee contracts with articulation committees and other groups for projects designed to improve or enhance transfer in particular disciplines. This plan will be finalized, and budgets and timelines attached, at the June meeting of Council. The plan is predicated on Council retaining the position of Special Advisor, and would have to be extensively revised if that position were not in place.

2. Task Force on Standards and Processes

The Task Force on Standards and Processes was established in 1996 to investigate and recommend solutions to problems caused by those institutional administrative processes which constitute barriers to smooth and efficient transfer. Its final report was endorsed by Council in December with very few and minor changes. ***(attachment C.2)*** Council requested that members of the Task Force continue to serve, and that the Task Force become a standing committee of Council, since it was felt that the administrative side of transfer is an important area that has received little attention up to now. All members agreed to do so. An implementation plan for the recommendations has now been devised and approved by the Task Force, and select recommendations will be communicated to the post-secondary system in the near future, with a request from Council for their cooperation.

Two major recommendations from the Task Force, however, are already underway. The first is the production of a user-friendly student-oriented "Transfer Survival Guide," and the second is the addition of the source credit value of courses (i.e. the credit value assigned by the sending institution) to the transfer guide database. It is anticipated that complete implementation of all recommendations may take several years, as some are quite complex, and others have large resource implications for institutions.

3. Transcript Standards Committee

As a result of consideration of the information provided in the research of responses obtained from the Student Outcomes Survey, the Council approached the BC Registrars Association in 1996 with a request that they establish a subcommittee to consider the development of a set of common standards for the preparation of student transcripts. It was thought that such guidelines could help to ensure that students across the system are treated equitably in how their work completed to date is clearly and appropriately recorded so that it can be fairly evaluated as required by other institutions. BCCAT

offered the Special Advisor and the Administrative Assistant as resource persons to this committee.

The Transcript Standards Committee presented its final report to the BCRA at its meeting of March 25th. The report was unanimously endorsed by the BCRA. They have decided to formally request the endorsement of BCCAT for the document also. This request will go to the June, 1998 meeting of Council. After that, the report, called the *BC Record and Transcript Guide* will be sent out by the BCRA to all colleges and universities in BC, with the recommendation that it become the standard for transcripting in BC. BCCAT has offered to house an electronic version of the Guide on its website. ***(attachment C.3)***

This guide has the potential to be very useful to all institutions in BC, including new or emerging public or private institutions who wish to institute transcripts which conform to some set of recognized standards. Since there is no set of Canadian transcript standards, it is envisioned that this guide may have considerable interest for other provinces as well, and inquiries have already been received from Alberta.

4. Transfer Survival Guide

This project has been referred to elsewhere in this report. The need for this document was identified in two separate places. It was one of the final recommendations of the study *Investigating Transfer* undertaken by Prof. Lesley Andres of UBC (see below) and it was also recommended by the Task Force on Standards and Processes, based on advice received in responses to a survey by counselors and advisors. Both reports cited the need identified by students for materials which would help them understand the somewhat dense and technical language of the BC Transfer Guide, and navigate the diverse and complicated procedures and regulations which are a part of the transfer process in BC. A committee made up of counselors and advisors, with representation from C2T2, CEISS, the CFS and the Premier's Youth Office has met several times and established guidelines for the content and format of this guide. A Request for Proposals has been issued, and a contractor will be chosen shortly to write and design the guide. The plan calls for a finished product to be available to the camera-ready stage by next November. A copy of the RFP is attached, since it contains a very clear outline of the proposed contents, and the background to the project. ***(attachment C.4)***

5. Nursing Articulation Project

Council has provided funds to the Nursing Articulation Committee to enable them "to develop guidelines to facilitate transferability of students among nursing programs." This project will involve the production of a "Nursing Programs' Transfer Guidelines" and includes the participation of all diploma and degree nursing programs in the province. The work is being undertaken by a subcommittee and funds are being used for travel and meeting expenses. An interim report on their activities and progress to date is due by the end of May.

6. Investigating Transfer Project: A Study of Transfer to B.C. Universities

This longitudinal study was approved by Council in June, 1996 and continues to be implemented. As reported last year, the Council has contracted with Prof. Lesley Andres at UBC to conduct a detailed research study to clarify the degree to which transfer students experience problems during the transfer process. Her study will involve extensive interviews with a sample of students at Simon Fraser University who have completed the transfer process from Douglas College, to determine the nature of the transfer process from the students' perspective and the difficulties and successes encountered before, during, and after transfer. Students will be asked to share their transcripts with the researchers in order to conduct analyses verifying the transfer of credit. Another phase of the study will involve students currently enrolled at Douglas College who are planning to transfer to SFU. These students will be interviewed several times over a two-year period to determine their continuing interest in transferring, the steps being taken to prepare for transfer, problems, from the students' perspective, encountered during the transfer process, and whether or not transfer was successful.

The first part of this project, *Phase I: Transfer Experiences of Students from Community College to University*, has been completed. ***(attachment C.6)*** It reports on the experiences of students who already had successfully transferred to Simon Fraser University from Douglas College. The author of this study concluded that for this set of students,

> *"despite the different levels of complication identified with regard to getting the necessary transfer information from the various sources available, most students satisfactorily transferred most or all of the credit hours earned at the community college. If they had taken courses for which transfer credit was not a possibility they typically knew it at the time. Obtaining transfer credit was, on the whole, not identified as a significant problem area. Indeed, for the majority of the students interviewed, the mechanics of the transfer process did not present an overwhelming source of distress."*

In an analysis of the kinds of problems or frustrations some students reported, the most frequent and significant pertained not to the actual procedures involving transfer but rather to the "transfer experience" itself. Specifically, many students found the transition from college to university difficult and stressful, requiring a significant adjustment to a different learning environment. Students were most distressed as a result of a decline in their grade point average in the first term following transfer. The students' perceptions for the cause of this decline are discussed in detail in the paper.

The author summarizes by stating that:

> *"most interviewees maintained that despite the annoyances related to the transfer process and a declining grade point average after transfer, in the long run, transferring from community college to university was the preferred route*

Community College was described as having provided solid preparation that eased the transition to university. This ease of transition was reported most often as the major advantage of transfer".

There are several recommendations that flowed from this research. However, the Council decided that it would wait for the completion of Phases II and III before giving further consideration to any future steps that should be taken and in distributing the report. Although the report describing Phase I of this study is not yet widely distributed, it does appear on the Council's web site.

7. Transcript Assessment Study, UBC

The results of the *1996 Student Outcomes Survey* revealed that about 16% of the respondents indicated that they experienced some kind of transfer difficulty. Of these students, more than half indicated that their difficulties included not receiving transfer credit for some courses. In order to better determine what kinds of courses were denied transfer credit, the Council commissioned a report by the Admissions Office at UBC. This study examined a random sample of 338 transcripts of college transfer students who had applied to UBC and had been admitted into one of five faculties. Transcripts were examined to determine how many credits had been earned by students prior to transfer, and how many had been granted by UBC upon transfer. A list of reasons why credit was normally denied at UBC was devised, and all courses which were denied credit on these transcripts were checked against this list. Since each individual course on every transcript in the sample had to be quantified, this was a labour intensive study.

A draft report has been received, and is currently out for peer review. Results of the study will be probably be available by June. Once finalized, the study will be distributed widely, and posted on our website. This study promises to provide us with much detail, not available through any other means, on the articulation and transfer of courses.

8. Profiles of Transfer Students in BC Universities

Last year, the Council published a report on a profile of transfer students attending Simon Fraser University. This report was contracted with the Office of Analytical Studies at SFU, to update its previous research on the profile of BC college transfer students who were admitted to SFU for the five year period between 1991/92 to 1995/96. This extremely valuable research provided extensive demographic information about the numbers of transfer students admitted to SFU and the institutions from which they transferred. In addition, the data also revealed the number of credits that students transferred, which programs of study students transferred into, the numbers of students completing degrees, and how long they took to do so. The study also analyzed the academic performance of transfer students compared to direct entry students as they progressed through to graduation. Comparisons of grade point average performance on a specific number of key courses were included in this analysis.

This past year, the Council contracted again with SFU to replicate their study for the five year period, 1992/93 - 1996/97 and contracted for similar reports to be completed by the University of Victoria and UBC. Reports from UVic and SFU have now been completed.

The SFU report added a new section to its report that describes students who were not admitted under the transfer student category but nevertheless had previously completed some transfer credits. A report from UBC is still in preparation and should be released this spring.

This type of research is invaluable because the finding that transfer students do perform very well at the universities to which they transfer helps to inculcate a positive set of values in the university community towards the transfer process and also gives reassurance to students studying or contemplating study in the colleges that they can expect to continue to perform very well after transferring to a university. The system continues to express its appreciation for the availability of these reports. The Council will be preparing a paper which integrates the results from all three universities and summarizes what we have learned from these profile reports.

The full reports entitled *Profile of B.C. College Transfer Students Admitted to Simon Fraser University 1992/93 to 1996/97* and *Profile of B.C. College Transfer Students Admitted to the University of Victoria* are available on our web site. ***(attachments C.8.1 and C.8.2)*** Hard copies have also be distributed system wide to College and University Presidents, Vice-Presidents of Instruction, Offices of Institutional Research, and others.

D. OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATED TO COUNCIL'S ROLE

1. General Activities

The number and variety of ongoing Council activities are numerous. Additionally, the Council proceeded with a few projects that were not specifically mentioned in the Management Letter primarily resulting from emerging needs that were not anticipated at the time the Management Letter was prepared. These ongoing and special activities include:

- Personnel matters: this year we hired a new Administrative Assistant, rewrote position descriptions, and redistributed office responsibilities
- Publishing newsletters and reports ***(attachment D.1)***
- Producing an Administrative Manual for office procedures and a Policy Manual for Council policy statements
- Assisting UNBC to institute new regulations regarding the block transfer of the associate degree by providing background, rationale and documentation
- Responding to requests for information from other jurisdictions, from students, from institutions
- Presenting a seminar on articulation and transfer in BC to two delegations from the Government of Hungary
- Undertaking an initial review of university entry requirements for students with a documented hearing disability

- Surveying institutions in regards to the implementation of a minimum grade of "pass" for transfer, and communicating with specific institutions regarding their concerns on this issue
- Surveying institutions regarding their perceptions and institutional practices surrounding the associate degree, in preparation for a full-scale review in 1998/99
- SIRI Legacy Fund: Council was successful in bidding for these funds ($17,760) which will be used to supplement our ongoing research activities

2. Secondment of Special Advisor

Much of the work which has been undertaken by Council staff this year would not have been possible without the position of Special Advisor. She was the person who took primary responsibility for:

- The Block Transfer Project
- Task Force on Standards and Processes
- Transcript Standards Committee of the BCRA
- Transfer Survival Guide
- UBC Transcript Assessment Study
- Working with articulation committees, including production of the revised Handbook and adding secondary school representatives
- Representing BCCAT on the Working Committee on Public-Private Articulation Agreements
- Representing BCCAT on the Writing Team which produced "Enhancing Transitions"
- Coordinating the production of, or writing, a newsletter and several special reports
- In her role as UNBC senator, providing liaison between BCCAT and UNBC

APPENDIX - LIST OF ATTACHMENTS SENT TO MINISTRY

*** = on BCCAT website ** = in BCCAT office**

A. 1997-98 Management Letter from the Ministry **
B.2.1 List of Articulation Committees with Secondary School Representatives **
B.2.2 Check List for Secondary School Representatives on Provincial Post-Secondary Articulation Committees **
B.2.3 Articulation Committee Handbook (revised) *
B.3.1 1997-98 BC Transfer Guide *
B.3.2 BCCAT Net Visitor Stats **
B.3.3 BCCAT Home Page *
B.3.4 BCCAT Net Web Site Modifications and Developments in 1997-98 **
B.4 Minutes of 1997 Meeting of Institutional Contact Persons **
B.5 Institute of Indigenous Government letter **
B.6.b.1 CEISS Research Proposal *
B.6.b.2 1997 Student Outcomes Questionnaire **
B.6.d University Entrance Requirements for Students Transferring from a Public BC Community College or University College *
B.6.d.1 Center for Applied Academics letter **
B.6.i Olds College Letter **
C.1.1 Block Transfer Discussion Paper *
C.1.2 Block Transfer Project Consultation and Response *
C.1.3 Special Report on the Block Transfer Project *
C.1.4 Enhancing Transfer: Draft Implementation Strategies **
C.2 Task Force on Standards & Processes: Final Report as Approved by Council *
C.3 Final Report of the Transcript Standards Committee **
C.4 Transfer Survival Guide Request for Proposals **
C.6 Investigating Transfer Project: Phase 1 Report *
C.8.1 Profile of BC College Transfer Students Admitted to Simon Fraser University: 1992-93 to 1996-97 *
C.8.2 Profile of BC College Transfer Students Admitted to the University of Victoria: 1992-93 to 1996-97 *
D.1 June 1997 Newsletter *